

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 ACDA-05 AID-05 /086 W

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R 271401Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4484
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, JO, FR, XF

SUBJECT: JORDANIAN PRESS COVERAGE OF KING HUSSEIN'S
VISIT TO FRANCE

1. SUMMARY. IN PREDICTABLY BLANKET COVERAGE OF KING'S
VISIT TO FRANCE, JORDANIAN PRESS HAS STRESSED HUSSEIN'S
DEMANDS FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, LONG-TIME FRANCO-ARAB
FRIENDSHIP SINCE 1967, AND POSSIBILITY OF FRENCH ROLE IN
MIDEAST PEACE MOVE. MUCH SPECULATION ON
EFFECT OF US PRESSURE ON ISRAEL RESULTING FROM REASSESS-
MENT. PROMINENCE GIVEN TO AFP REPORT ON POSSIBILITY OF
JORDANIAN-SYRIAN-EGYPTIAN COOPERATION AGAINST ISRAEL. END
SUMMARY.

2. JORDANIAN PRESS HAS GIVEN FULL COVERAGE TO KING'S
SOJOURN IN FRANCE, TREATING VISIT AS ONE MORE EPI-
SODE IN CONTINUING FRIENDSHIP WHICH HAS GAINED IN
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STRENGTH SINCE FRANCE "CONDEMNED ISRAELI AGGRESSION

IN 1967". KING'S REFERENCE IN RADIO MONTE CARLO PRESS CONFERENCE TO "COOPERATION AND THE FORMATION OF COMMITTEES TO STUDY PROJECTS IN WHICH THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT CAN PARTICIPATE" IS OFTEN CITED, AS IS HIS STRESS ON ROLE FRANCE CAN PLAN IN "COMPELLING" ISRAEL TO PULL BACK FROM THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. "FRANCE HAS ALWAYS PARTICIPATED IN ALL ATTEMPTS TO BRING ABOUT A JUST AND PERMANENT PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST".

3. KING'S COMMENTS IN MIDEAST SITUATION REVEAL LITTLE NEW, REVIEWING NECESSITY OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AND POSSIBILITY OF CARRYING TALKS TO SECURITY COUNCIL IF GENEVA FAILS. KING EXPRESSED INTEREST IN US ROLE IN PRESSURING ISRAEL TO WITHDRAW; "I HAVE MANY QUESTIONS TO ASK ON THIS SUBJECT, AND I HOPE TO OBTAIN ANSWERS TO THEM IN WASHINGTON".

4. LOCAL PRESS GIVES PROMINENCE TO AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE REPORT (MENTIONED IN DEPT PRESS BRIEFING APRIL 25) THAT ISRAELI MILITARY OBSERVERS BELIEVE THERE IS SERIOUS POSSIBILITY THAT JORDAN WILL JOIN SYRIA AND EGYPT IN ANY NEW WAR. "THESE OBSERVERS ARE VIEWING WITH INCREASING ALARM THE MOUNTING MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN SYRIA AND JORDAN; IN CASE OF WAR, JORDAN IS EXPECTED TO MOVE...ONTO THE WEST BANK. THE JORDAN ARMY HAS 500 TANKS...AND CAN EASILY GET ANY QUANTITY OF ROCKETS FROM ITS NEIGHBORS SAUDI ARABIA AND SYRIA.... JORDAN, SYRIA, IRAQ, AND SAUDI ARABIA BETWEEN THEM CAN ASSEMBLE A FORCE OF 4,000 TANKS AND 1,000 WARPLANES."

5. COMMENT: MOST PRONOUNCED LOCAL REACTION TO VISIT THUS FAR HAS BEEN IRRITATION, VOICED BY SEVERAL EMBASSY CONTACTS, WITH LO-LEVEL GOF RECEPTION GIVEN KING AT AIRPORT, SINCE IT WAS ASSUMED THAT FRENCH PRESIDENT OR PRIME MINISTER WOULD MEET KING HUSSEIN.

SUDDARTH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975AMMAN02795
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750147-1034
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750412/aaaaalax.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <21 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JORDANIAN PRESS COVERAGE OF KING HUSSEIN'S VISIT TO FRANCE
TAGS: PFOR, JO, FR, XF, (HUSSEIN I)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006